

VZCZCXR06329

PP RUEHLN RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHDBU #0841 1270841

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P R 070841Z MAY 06

FM AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7433

INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE

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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC

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RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 8662

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STATE FOR SCA/CEN, DRL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TAJIKISTAN: IRPT SAYS DETAINED MEMBER MURDERED

¶1. (U) Islamic Renaissance Party of Tajikistan (IRPT) member Sadullo Marupov died by falling from the third story of a police station in Isfara, a northern Tajikistan town in the Sughd region known for its strong Islamic roots. Officials state that Marupov committed suicide; however, IRPT members refute the official statement and say instead that police killed Marupov.

¶2. (U) Vohidkhon Qosiddinov, Head of the IRPT's Administration Office, traveled to Isfara to investigate the death. He remains adamant that Marupov did not commit suicide by throwing himself out the window. He claims that Marupov was "a theologian and deeply religious man" and had no motivation to commit suicide.

¶3. (SBU) Qosiddinov told Embassy sources police detained Marupov several days earlier and accused him of being a member of the non-registered group "Ba'yat." Marupov told IRPT officials he was tortured with electroshock during his detention and then released. After his release, he was once again arrested on May 3. According to official information, Marupov jumped over the body of a sleeping guard and threw himself out the third floor window to his death. Qosiddinov told embassy sources investigators will present more information on the case in the coming days, and he will keep Post informed.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: The government has pegged Ba'yat as an extremist group, but it remains unclear whether the group actually exists or if it is a government-created excuse to jail those who oppose the government. The group has been blamed for a series of crimes in Isfara including the murder of a Baptist missionary. The Sughd region's police have a reputation for being tough on political parties perceived as opposition and accusing those who criticize the government with false crimes. Although Marupov could be a member of an extremist organization, the authorities have not been forthcoming with official charges or evidence of a crime to detain him in the first place. Marupov's allegations of torture and the IRPT's claim that he

did not commit suicide cannot be dismissed. END COMMENT.

HOAGLAND